

Trends in Workplace Design

Design for Flexibility: Flexible work boosts engagement

- Multiple uses of space
- Controllable and adjustable systems in the area
- Flexible space for continuously changing electronic offices

Support Mobility: More people are working away from their desks

- Wireless technology for easy moving
- Easy moving spaces to make smaller or larger

Enable Informal Social Interaction: Employee engagement is important

- Multiple spaces for interaction (café's, nooks)
- Locate centrally for maximum use
- Support stress reduction and relaxation

Design for a Variety of Meeting Sizes and Types: activity-based work settings are becoming more popular

- Provide closed/private rooms for multiple group sizes
- Provide open/informal spaces for multiple group sizes
- Technologies for visual displays within group rooms
- Rooms dedicated to a specific project

Support Individual Concentration: Acoustics are needed for privacy

- Acoustically sound rooms or pods
- Zone quiet spaces away from group rooms or social areas

http://www.wbdg.org/design/design_change.php

<http://www.hok.com/thought-leadership/top-10-trends-influencing-workplace-design/>

History of Workplace Designs

Taylorism (1904): Credited as one of the first to design an office space, Frederick Taylor was fixated on efficiency and supervision. His office designs mimicked that of a mass-producing factory floor

- Open plan with workers lined up in rows
- Production-line nature allowed uninterrupted flow of work
- Bosses kept a close visual on workers from private offices

Bürolandschaft (1960): The German “office landscape” brought the socialist values of Europe’s 1950s to the workplace.

- Executive suites no longer sheltered management from employees
- Side-by-side workstations for clerks
- Pinwheel arrangements for designers made collaborating easier
- Workspace layout remained undivided

Action Office (1968): Bürolandschaft inspired Herman Miller to create a product based on the new European workplace philosophy. He designed the first modular business furniture known as the Action Office system. Criticizing the traditional, complacent office design of fixed forms, the Action concept fit the way people truly worked.

- Low dividers
- Flexible work surfaces
- Components combine and recombine to adjust to a transitioning workplace
- Today, commonly known by its more sinister name: the cubicle

Cube Farm (1980): As the ranks of middle managers grew, a new class of employee was created: too important for a mere desk but too subordinate for a window seat. Facilities managers accommodated their new class of employees in the cheapest way possible, with modular walls.

- Partially enclosed workstations separated by 5-6 foot partitions
- Isolates workers from open-workplace distractions
- Act as a visual and acoustical barrier between neighboring employees
- Allows employee with a greater degree of privacy and personalization

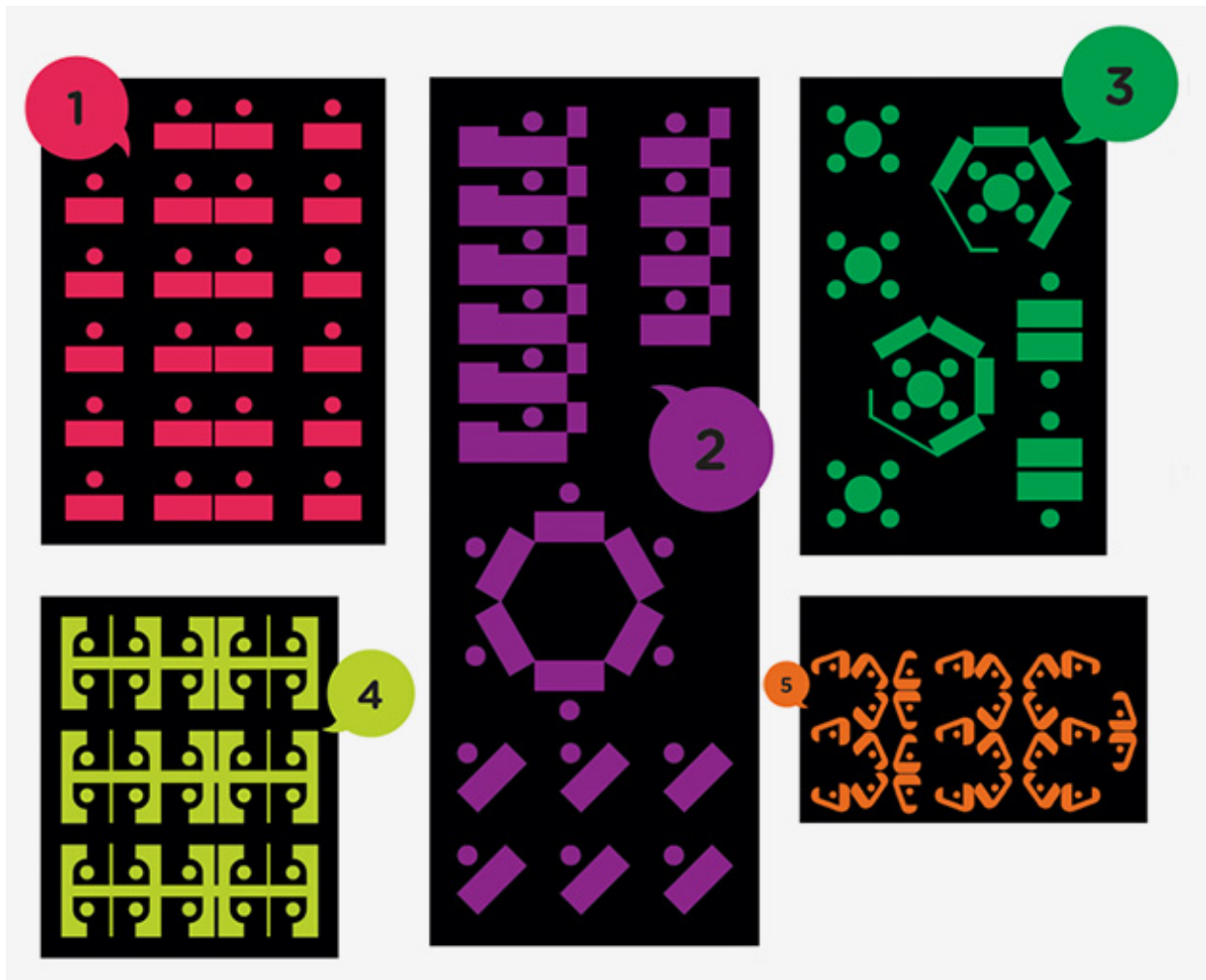
Virtual Office (1994): Ad agency TBWA\Chiat\Day's Los Angeles headquarters was a Frank Gehry success. But the Company’s CEO designed an interior workplace that was a fiasco. With no personal desks; employees had to grab a laptop in the morning and scramble to claim a seat.

- Productivity quickly plummeted
- Prevents employees from having a sense of place and belonging in their workplace

Networking (present): Attempting to part ways with the sea of cubicles, furniture designers have tried to encourage sociability without going to the extreme. Recently created systems separate work areas without the use of harsh dividers.

- Privacy is suggested if not realized
- Movable, semi-enclosed pods and connected desks

- Large tables with low dividers cordon off personal space while still allowing employees to effectively collaborate



<http://www.hermanmiller.com/products/workspaces/individual-workstations/action-office-system.html>

http://archive.wired.com/culture/design/magazine/17-04/pl_design

<http://www.hermanmiller.com/products/workspaces.html>

Furniture Systems

Open Spaces: Cubicles are becoming a thing of the past, as “hot desking” is now the new trend.

- Gives employees the space to move around and work where they want
- Lounge seating areas enable employees to meet and collaborate spontaneously

Mobility: With offices becoming more mobile than ever, furniture designers believe that the workspaces should follow.

- Chairs, stools, and standing height tables are fashioned with wheels
- Aware of the health effect of prolonged sitting, employers are now focused on ergonomic chairs and stand up desks for all employees to work comfortably

Outdoors In: Employees work better when they don't feel confined inside all day. Greenery and plants allow for a fresh and lively workplace atmosphere

No More Grey: Bold and bright colors added to upholstery and accent walls are giving the boring and drab grey office a facelift. Splashes of color not only add interest but colors like red and orange have been proven to stimulate productivity.

Non-panel based: Can be open or more private, made to meet the needs of many workplaces.

Panel based: Increase electrical flexibility and options, to meet the needs of more businesses. Also provides many options of interchangeable designs and panels to fit the style of the customer.

<http://www.ais-inc.com/Products/AllProducts>

<http://moredays.com/blog/best-5-colors-that-increase-productivity/>

<http://www.brisaluminium.com.au/office-design-trends-2014?>